1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FYS Tanala FYS



for Europeans. The death rate is very high during infancy and early childhood and those who survive this perilous period are, necessarily, of strong physique. Old people are to be seen in all villages. It seemed to me that women were slightly more numerous than men, but I have no proof of this. The actual ages of individuals are hard to determine, for none of the Menabe know the dates of their births, but from incidents which they remember it is safe to say that persons of sixty to seventy years are fairly numerous, while a few reach eighty years and over.

Most of the old people seem to be mentally and physically alert. Senile dementia is almost unknown. Deafness is very rare, but blindness is not infrequent. I saw two cases of cataract and several other cases of blindness due to infections. The strength and activity of old people are often amazing. This holds true for other Malagasy tribes as well as the Tanala. A missionary living among the Betsileo told me that the mother of their maid servant, who was herself middle-aged, had decided some months before that she was too old to live without someone to wait on her. She had come to get the maid, walking over eighty miles. Two of my Menabe informants, who were both over seventy, seemed as active as young men and still did their full share of work in the rice fields. One of them was living in a neighboring village and regularly walked ten miles daily over hilly country, five miles each way, without suffering fatigue.

Old people continue the regular activities of adults until they become feeble or otherwise incapacitated. After this they assume the lighter duties of child tending. It seemed to me that the relations between children and old people were closer and more friendly than those between parent and child. The old people tell the children stories, show them how to make toys, supervise their games, etc. The children in turn wait on the old people willingly. There seem to be many friendships between old men and children who are not closely related to them. The children are taught to treat all old people with respect and habitually address them, even if they are strangers, as grandfather or grandmother.

Young adults are also respectful, as a rule, for disrespect would be considered a sign of ill breeding, but they have no superstitious reverence for age and I have heard young men make fun of old ones, although never to their faces. The middle-aged treat the old, except those of their immediate family, very much as equals. In village councils, etc., age in itself does not confer authority. A